



Rugby Free

Secondary School

## Code of Conduct for LAB Members & Governance

### Rugby Free Secondary School

*Anchored in the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life and aligned with the Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education*

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#### 1. Purpose and Status

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations for all members of the Governing Board of Rugby Free Secondary School. It is designed to support high standards of ethical governance, effective decision-making, and positive relationships with the school community.

All governors agree to abide by this Code as a condition of their appointment. It will be reviewed annually, normally at the first meeting of the autumn term, and published on the school website.

New governors will be asked to agree to this Code as part of their induction.

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#### 2. Our Values and Principles

We are committed to the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life and will demonstrate ethical leadership at all times:

##### **Selflessness**

We will act solely in the best interests of pupils, staff, and the wider school community.

##### **Integrity**

We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might inappropriately influence us. We will not seek personal benefit and will declare and resolve any interests or relationships.

### **Objectivity**

We will act impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best available evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### **Accountability**

We are accountable to the school community for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to appropriate scrutiny.

### **Openness**

We will act transparently and share information unless there are clear and lawful reasons not to do so.

### **Honesty**

We will be truthful and act in good faith.

### **Leadership**

We will model these principles in our own behaviour, promote ethical governance, and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

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## **3. Our Role as Governors**

We recognise that our role is strategic, not operational. We will focus on:

- **Strategic leadership:** defining the vision, fostering a positive culture and ethos, and approving the strategy of the school.
- **Accountability and assurance:** holding the Headteacher and senior leaders to account for educational performance, safeguarding, and financial probity.
- **Engagement:** maintaining strategic oversight of relationships with parents, carers, staff, pupils, and the wider community.

We will:

- Act within our powers and in accordance with the school's Instrument of Government and Scheme of Delegation.
- Promote the success and best interests of Rugby Free Secondary School.
- Exercise independent judgement.
- Exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence.
- Avoid conflicts of interest and not accept benefits from third parties.
- Declare interests in proposed transactions or arrangements.

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## **4. Our Individual Commitments**

As individual governors, we agree to:

*Fulfil our role and responsibilities*

- Focus on strategic governance and avoid involvement in day-to-day management.
- Fulfil our responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Delegation.
- Develop, share and live the ethos and values of Rugby Free Secondary School.
- Adhere to all school policies and procedures.
- Fully cooperate with requests necessary to ensure compliance, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and right-to-work checks.
- Work collectively for the benefit of the school.
- Be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
- Consider how our decisions may affect pupils, staff, families and the local community.
- Support and stand by collective decisions of the Governing Board.
- Speak up where decisions or actions conflict with the Nolan Principles or may place pupils at risk.
- Only speak or act on behalf of the Governing Board when authorised to do so.
- Follow established procedures when making or responding to complaints.
- Uphold the school's reputation in our private communications, including on social media.
- Have regard to our responsibilities under the Equality Act and work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

*Demonstrate our commitment to the role*

- Involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Board and serve on committees or working groups as required.
- Make every effort to attend all meetings and explain in advance if unable to attend.
- Arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers and ready to contribute positively.
- Observe agreed meeting protocols and procedures.
- Get to know the school well and welcome opportunities to be involved in school activities.
- Arrange school visits in advance with relevant staff and observe school and board protocols.
- Continue to honour this Code when visiting the school in a personal capacity.
- Participate in induction training, prioritise required training (such as safeguarding), and commit to ongoing development.

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## 5. Building and Maintaining Relationships

We will:

- Develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, senior leaders, staff, parents, carers, pupils and other stakeholders.
- Act as ambassadors for Rugby Free Secondary School.
- Champion the voices of our school community.
- Express views openly, courteously and respectfully, both inside and outside meetings.
- Work to create an inclusive environment where each governor's contributions are valued.
- Support the Chair in leading the Governing Board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

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## 6. Respecting Confidentiality

We will:

- Observe confidentiality inside and outside the school where matters are deemed confidential or concern individual staff, pupils or families.
- Not reveal the details of any Governing Board vote.
- Ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- Maintain confidentiality even after leaving office.
- Practise good ICT security, keep personal data safe and support GDPR compliance.

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## 7. Conflicts of Interest and Transparency

We will:

- Declare any business, personal or other interests connected with Governing Board business. These will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
- Declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting where relevant.
- Withdraw from discussions and votes where a conflict of interest arises.
- Accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school website.
- Act as governors in the interests of the whole school, not as representatives of any group.
- Accept that, in the interests of open governance, our names, terms of office, roles, attendance records, category of governor, and relevant business and pecuniary interests will be published on the school website.
- Accept that information relating to governors will be collected and recorded on national databases, some of which will be publicly available.

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## **8. Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this Code will be taken seriously. Concerns will be addressed in accordance with the school's procedures.

A breach of this Code may lead to formal action and, as a last resort, removal from the Governing Board.